

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

200 W. Washington, Suite 301  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 233-0696  
<http://www.in.gov/legislative>

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6560**

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 340

**NOTE PREPARED:** Feb 18, 2010

**BILL AMENDED:** Feb 18, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Parole Board Duties, Community Corrections, and Bail.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Sen. Bray

**FIRST SPONSOR:** Rep. L. Lawson

**BILL STATUS:** CR Adopted - 2<sup>nd</sup> House

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** ☒ **GENERAL**  
**DEDICATED**  
**FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

**Summary of Legislation:** (Amended) This bill has the following provisions:

- A. *Community Investigations* – It makes conducting a community investigation by the parole board discretionary rather than mandatory.
- B. *Standard Period of Parole Reduced* – It reduces the standard period of parole from two years to one year unless the parolee: (1) is a repeat parolee; (2) is being placed on parole for a conviction for a crime of violence; (3) is a sex offender; or (4) has violated a Department of Correction (DOC) rule in the six months prior to release.
- C. *Conduct Adjustment Procedures* – It provides that the DOC rules concerning the maintenance of order and discipline among committed persons applies to persons placed in a community corrections program or assigned to a community transition program.
- D. *Chargebacks* – It repeals a provision that requires a county that receives a grant from the DOC commissioner for the establishment and operation of a community corrections program to be charged a sum for certain persons committed to the department and confined in a state correctional facility.
- E. *Best Practices* – It requires that a community corrections plan must include a method to evaluate each component of the program to determine the overall use of DOC-approved best practices for the program. It provides that DOC must require community corrections programs to submit an evaluation of the use of DOC-approved best practices for community correction program components in proposed budget requests.
- F. *Home Detention* – It provides that, for the purposes of the law concerning home detention, a home includes the residence of another person who is not part of the social unit formed by an offender's immediate family.
- G. *Direct Placement of Offenders* It establishes certain standards and criteria for direct placement of offenders in community corrections programs. It specifies that, for purposes of the law concerning

direct placement in community corrections programs: (1) "home" means the actual living area of the temporary or permanent residence of a person; and (2) a person who is placed in a community corrections program under the law is entitled to earn credit time. It allows a person to be deprived of credit time for violating a rule or condition of a community corrections program.

- H. *Indiana Bail Law* – It makes changes to the Indiana bail law concerning: (1) notices to sureties and bond agents; and (2) failure to appear.
- I. *Sentencing Policy Study Committee* – It requires the Sentencing Policy Study Committee to study and make recommendations regarding whether individuals on parole should be eligible to receive credit time to potentially shorten their period of parole.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2010.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** (Revised) *Charge-Backs*- Charge-backs were a method used by the Department of Correction to penalize counties with community corrections grants and who did not admit a minimal number of nonviolent felons. DOC has not used the formula in statute for penalizing community corrections counties in at least the last ten years.

*Community Investigations* – Under current law, community investigations are prepared by the parole field agents when the Parole Board is considering the release on parole of an offender who is serving a sentence with a determinate term of at least ten years. As proposed, the parole board would have discretion to order and consider a community investigation and report.

This provision may allow for offenders to be released earlier if a community investigation is not required to be completed. Under current law, the Parole Board is required to have the community investigation report before considering whether to admit the offender to parole. According to the Parole Board, these community investigation reports generally take between 6 and 12 months to complete. If these offenders can be released sooner, the number of available beds in the Department of Correction (DOC) may increase. Currently, DOC's adult male facilities operate at almost 100% capacity.

As an illustration, the Parole Board may choose to concentrate on offenders who were sentenced for violent crimes or crimes involving the possession or use of firearms. LSA examined the records of 1,096 offenders who were released in CY 2008 on parole who had determinate sentences of ten years or more. Of these, roughly 46% of the offenders were committed to DOC for either violent crimes or crimes that involved firearms.

Drug Dealing	Drug Possession	Firearms	Other	Property	Violent	Grand Total
250	41	26	22	273	484	1096
23%	4%	2%	2%	25%	44%	100%

*Reduced Length of Time on Parole* – Under current law, sex offenders who are released from DOC facilities are required to remain on parole for ten years and sexually violent offenders are required to remain on parole for the rest of their lives. Offenders who are not sex offenders or sexually violent offenders are required to be on parole for two years. As proposed, the length of time that these offenders (who are neither sex offenders or sexually violent offenders) would be on parole is one year.

In CY 2008, there were 2,631 offenders with no prior commitment in DOC facilities and were committed for neither a sex or violent offense who were released and could be eligible to be released from parole in one year. Reducing the number of offenders on parole would reduce the need for additional parole officers. In

December 2009, there were 150 parole agents and supervisors.

(Revised) *Credit Time and Conduct Adjustment Procedures* – By explicitly allowing credit time, community corrections administrators can apply more sanctions at the local level and allow the local programs to avoid returning the offender to DOC. In practice, some offenders are earning credit time when they are in community corrections programs. If IC 11-11-5 applies to offenders in community corrections, community transition, and parole in this statute, then administrators would have the clear ability to take away credit time.

(Revised) *Best Practices* – "Best Practices" or "Evidence-Based Practices" are programs and principles that correctional professionals have evaluated and concluded are effective in treating offenders in community-based programs and facilities.

(Revised) *Definition of Home Detention* – Changing the definition of home (IC 35-38-2.5-2) will expand a court's options to place more offenders on home detention by including friends and people in common law relationships. In September 2008, 2,570 offenders were on home detention.

(Revised) *Home Detention and Electronic Monitoring* – Community corrections administrators report that the standards that exist for supervision methods, treatment, and education programs and use of technology are higher for community corrections programs than they are for private contractors. This would make both contractors and community corrections staff comply with the same standards. There are 74 community corrections agencies.

### **Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** (Revised) *Indiana Bail Law* – LSA expects this portion of the bill to have a minimal effect on local court operations. However, no published data exists which shows the percentage of criminal cases that this bill could affect.

(Revised) *Failure to Appear When Defendant Is Released Under Notices to Sureties and Bond Agents* – Current law has no time table for when the clerk is required to mail a notice to the surety agent that a defendant, under the supervision of the surety agent, has failed to appear in court. As proposed, the clerk of the court would be required to mail a notice to the bail bond agent within 30 days of the court noting that the defendant failed to appear.

LSA found no published statewide information reporting the number of cases when a defendant failed to appear in court. Furthermore, it is not known whether clerks currently mail out these failure-to-appear notices within 30 days. Assuming that no county mails these notices out within 30 days, the following published information is used to illustrate this provision's possible effect on each county:

- The felony and misdemeanor filings in 2008 for all 92 counties from the *Indiana Judicial Report*.
- Statistics on the percentage of pretrial releases from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) that were reported from the 75 largest counties in the United States.

BJS reports that 33% of all criminal defendants in the counties reporting were released from jail on a surety bond prior to their court hearings and that 29% either were rearrested, failed to appear, or were fugitives. The estimated defendants who violated bond were divided by 52 to represent the potential number of cases each county could handle each week in which a criminal defendant violates conditions of their surety bond in court.

The following table shows the weekly number of failure-to-appear notices distributed in all 92 counties. On average, the courts in 90 counties will presumably mail 25 or less notices each week within 30 days. Counties with more average weekly filings would more likely be affected by this requirement if they do not have adequate staff and office equipment.

Estimated Defendants Who Fail to Appear Each Week	Number of Counties	Cumulative
5 or less	72	72
More than 5 or equal to 10	8	80
More than 10 or equal to 20	7	87
More than 20 or equal to 25	3	90
46 per week	1	91
85 per week	1	92

(Revised) *Failure to Appear After Posting a Cash Bond* – Under current law, when a defendant fails to appear in court *for any reason* after being admitted to bail on a cash bond with the clerk of the circuit court, the court is required to issue a warrant for the defendant's arrest. If a civil action has been filed by the victim of the crime, the cash deposit will not be forfeited until the court has entered a final judgment against the defendant.

As proposed, if the final judgment in a civil suit has been entered, the court is required to declare the bond forfeited no earlier than 120 days after the defendant has failed to appear in court. LSA found no published data that shows the length of time that courts currently take to forfeit these bonds in Indiana.

Definitions:

Cash bond – The defendant deposits a percentage (usually 10%) of the full bail amount with the court. This percentage of the bail is returned after the disposition of the case, but the court often retains a small portion for administrative costs. Defendants failing to appear in court are liable to the court for the full amount of the bail. (IC 35-33-8-3.2(a)(2))

Surety bond – A bail bond company signs a promissory note to the court for the full bail amount and charges the defendant a fee for the service (usually 10% of the full bail amount). If the defendant fails to appear, the bond company is liable to the court for the full bail amount. Frequently, the bond company requires the defendant to post collateral in addition to the fee. (IC 35-33-8-3.2(a)(1)(B))

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** DOC; Indiana Parole Board.

**Local Agencies Affected:** Community corrections agencies.

**Information Sources:** Greg Server, Chairman of the Indiana Parole Board; DOC Offender Information System.

**Fiscal Analyst:** Mark Goodpaster, 317-232-9852.